

**MAJOR MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES AND PROGRAM RISKS  
FACING DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR IDENTIFIED BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE  
December 2000**

<b>Bureau</b>	<b>Management Challenge</b>	<b>Status/Corrective Actions</b>	<b>Target Correction Date</b>	<b>Contact</b>
National Park Service (NPS)	<u>Information Management</u> : NPS needs to give higher priority to developing better scientific information about the condition of its natural and cultural resources to ensure that its planning and funding process address the most pressing needs.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed	Ongoing	Frank Seng
National Park Service	<u>Information Management</u> : NPS needs to develop more accurate data on its backlog of maintenance problems to set better priorities for projects and to budget accordingly.	This challenged being addressed as part of the corrective action for the Departmentwide material weakness on Inadequate Maintenance Management Capability	Ongoing	Mike Kaas Frank Seng
National Park Service	<u>Organizational Alignment Control</u> : The Service needs to improve park managers' accountability for achieving results.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed	Ongoing	Frank Seng
National Park Service	<u>Human Capital and Acquisition Management</u> : The Service needs to address persistent management problems in its concessions program. NPS concession specialists and contracting staff are not adequately qualified and trained and the Service uses out dated practices in its backlog of expired contracts.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed	Ongoing	Frank Seng

National Park Service	<i>Performance Management:</i> NPS needs to better manage its structural fire safety program for the over 30,000 structures it has responsibility for, including hotels, motels, cabins, visitor centers, and historic buildings.	This challenge is being addressed as part of the NPS corrective actions for the material weakness on its Structural Fire Program	Ongoing	Frank Seng
Office of Special Trustee	<i>Information Management:</i> Problems persist with the systems used to manage Indian trust funds.	On March 31, 1999, Interior completed the conversion to a new commercial, contractor-operated, off-the-shelf trust fund accounting and investment system. The Trust Asset and Accountability System initiative is well underway on four fronts (1) deployment of the title functionality, (2) finalization of the leasing functionality, (3) development of an enhance appraisal module, and (4) exploration of an enhance probate module.	Ongoing	Tommy Thompson
Office of Special Trustee	<i>Financial Management:</i> Inadequate accounting and information, poor record-keeping and internal controls prevent the Department from ensuring that trust funds are properly managed.	An Indian Affairs Records Management Program has been established to ensure that a uniform records management program having authoritative policies, guidance and training requirements is practiced within OST and BIA. Management continues to review and evaluate	Ongoing	Tommy Thompson

		on methods to continue follow-up clean up efforts including the use of other regional data for additional testing in the use on an external credit bureau database for locating the whereabouts of unknown information. Also, records management improvements are underway and scheduled for completion by May 2002.		
Bureau of Indian Affairs	<i>Financial Management:</i> Budget formulation problems continue to impede the tribal self-determination policy – a national policy providing for tribal participation in and management of federal Indian programs.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed	Ongoing	Jerry Fiely
Departmental	<i>Strategic Planning:</i> A variety of management problems hinder the Department's ability to effectively direct its efforts to maintain healthy natural systems such as focusing the ecosystems restoration efforts and coordinating the multiple entities participating in these efforts.	The ecosystem management initiatives require actions outside the Department's control. The Department is working with all stakeholders; sister federal agencies; local units of government; state units of government; and sovereign Indian Tribes to develop sustainable ecosystem solutions. The Department has adopted an ecosystem management approach to protect and maintain healthy	Ongoing	Peter Umhofer/ Terrence Salt

		ecological systems. Ecosystem management focuses on ecological, scientific, economic, and social factors that extend beyond the administrative boundaries of the Department and other entities. The Department has developed a strategic plan for how restoration of the South Florida ecosystem will be accomplished.		
Departmental	<u>Organizational Alignment and Control:</u> Problems hinder managing across agency boundaries and coordinating with multiple entities to plan and implement ecosystem projects.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed	Ongoing	Peter Umhofer/ Terrence Salt
Departmental	<u>Human Capital Management:</u> Replacing experienced personnel including federal firefighters will be a challenge for the Department.	Strategy and implementation plan being developed.	Ongoing	Carolyn Cohen
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)	<u>Financial Management:</u> Ensuring that the values of lands being exchanged are approximately equal, or equal as required by the Federal Lands Policy and Management Act has been problematic for BLM.	BLM revised its land exchange review and approval requirements on April 11, 2000. All land exchanges are now reviewed and approved by the BLM National Land Exchange Team or the State Director. The technical review process includes a review of the transactions to ensure the Federal and non-Federal lands proposed	Ongoing	Jean Fend

		for exchange are appropriately valued, consistent with law, regulation and policy.		
Departmental	<i>Budget Formulation and Execution:</i> Interior has had difficulty budgeting for and reporting increased funding needs for the operation and maintenance of newly acquired lands.	The Department continues to refine its efforts to identify and secure funding for the costs for operations and maintenance of Federal facilities and lands. The Department's Safe Visits Initiative has made great progress in identifying and tracking the maintenance needs and the bureaus are all making efforts to better identify operational funding needs. The bureaus have developed automated systems to track their operational funding needs. Currently, the Department is conducting an analysis of the operational costs incurred by the bureaus related to land acquisitions in order to determine ways to identify, request and fund non-recurring and recurring operational costs directly related to land acquisition. The Land Conservation, Preservation and Infrastructure Improvement Program provides \$1.6 million for	Ongoing	Pam Haze

		Federal and state land acquisition, conservation grants, and historic preservation in FY 2001. Funding totaling \$100 million was also included for maintenance.		
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